



Riverside Hub

An Infrastructure Project Serving Brantford/Brant and Surrounding Areas

The Riverside Hub Project is a partnership of ten mental health, social recreation, developmental service, and wellness organizations working together to construct a 171,000 square-foot community hub in Brantford's downtown core. We passionately believe that a Hub will make Brantford a better place by providing a welcoming, purpose-designed facility that improves service access and integration, while fostering relationships, belonging, and wellbeing.

Our partners share an urgent, critical need for a new space to meet the needs of our communities. Our current buildings have extremely high overhead and lease costs. They are outdated and do not meet our program, accessibility, health and safety, or growth needs. A purpose-designed, co-located space will allow us to harness cost efficiencies, and to find smarter and more innovative ways to deliver the best possible value for every dollar spent.

After three years of background work, the Riverside Hub Development Committee is exploring the feasibility of a site in Brantford's downtown core in partnership with the City of Brantford. We are working toward completing a shovel-ready project proposal to submit for federal, provincial, and municipal infrastructure funding opportunities in the fall of 2022. We invite you to learn more about our plans to build a stronger community together.



The Partners

Coming Together to Build a Stronger Community



Mental Health &
Developmental Services



Supportive LGBTQ2+
Advocacy Community



Mental Health & Autism
Supports for Children



Health, Health Promotion
& Food Security Services



Brantford Hospital –
Outpatient Mental Health
Services



Mental Health and Crisis
Supports, Safe Beds



Addictions, Mental Health,
Housing and Employment
Services



Housing & Employment
Supports



Social Recreation and
Inclusion programs for
individuals with disabilities



Peer Support, Social
Recreation, and Employment

Who We Serve

Together, our Hub partners serve approximately **27,000 community members** each year. Our programs support individuals from all walks of life as they connect, seek services, and heal.

Who We Employ

Together, our partners employ roughly **800 community members** working in health, social services, developmental services, social recreation, and more. Around 500 of these staff will be on-site daily.



Types of Services



Social Recreation



Mental Health Services



Children's Services



Healthcare Services



Developmental Services



Addictions Supports



Crisis Services



Programs for Intimate Partner Violence



2SLGBTQ+ Services and Advocacy



Housing Supports



Employment Supports



Food Security Programs

Background

Making the Case for Riverside Hub



In 2019, Willowbridge Community Services began exploring options for resolving the critical issues presented by their facility on 54 Brant Avenue. Gathering input from the community, Willowbridge was gearing up for a major renovation or a move.

However, extensive community consultations soon revealed that many service providers in the city were also struggling with similar issues. As themes began to emerge from community focus groups, surveys, and feedback forms, Brantford's core service providers came together and formed a committee to help address shared concerns.



Community & Partner Feedback

The Brantford community identified major concerns with health and social service facilities:

► ACCESSIBILITY

Many facilities are hard to reach by transit, are not fully wheelchair accessible, have poor lighting and poor ventilation.

► PRIVACY & SAFETY

Facilities have serious issues with security for staff and clients, and layout/design do not allow for privacy during sessions.

► RESOURCES

Not-for-profits in Brantford typically compete for the same funding and remain siloed.

► INTEGRATION

Services are not coordinated or integrated, which results in clients having to repeat their stories at a high emotional cost. Lack of integration also creates further difficulties in connecting clients to the service they need.

► AFFORDABILITY

Facilities have extremely high overhead costs and lease payments (over \$1,000,000 / year) for outdated spaces with no partner input.

► CAPACITY

Demand for services is at an all-time high, but facilities are cramped and offer no room for growth.

► SUITABILITY

Programming spaces do not suit the needs of the community or programming and lack critical infrastructure.

► DIVERSITY

Facilities are not welcoming or inclusive of diverse communities and in some cases present as unsafe.

Responding to the Community

Our vision for a new Community Hub in Brantford

In response to the community's feedback, our partners determined that our communities would be better served if we worked together. Our committee created a vision for a Community Hub and pulled in a broad range of experts to help us co-locate our services in a new, central, purpose-designed facility. Our partnership envisions a Brantford where no one is left behind, where everyone has the opportunity find support in their moment of need in a space that says, "you truly matter to us".

The Model

The Riverside Hub will consist of a 171,000 sq ft health and social service hub in the downtown core. We are currently conducting a feasibility study, in partnership with the City of Brantford, on a site at Icomm Drive on the East side of the Parkade. We intend to create:

- A facility that is purpose designed and shows the community that they matter
- A coordinated, integrated access point for streamlined mental health services that creates a positive participant experience
- Exploration of shared elements for seamless client experiences and economies of scale with shared reception, operating and facility costs, communications, IT, and other back office supports.
- The facility will be fully sustainable, with a net zero carbon footprint.



What Does a Hub Mean for the Community?

Benefits of the Hub Model

There will be numerous opportunities available through the economies of scale created from forming a Community Hub. These will directly benefit both the community, and the partners co-located in the space. These include:

- Increased access to coordinated services for the community
- Improved sense of community inclusion and belonging
- Reduction in overhead costs through shared resources, lower monthly lease costs, elimination of duplicated services, and reduced operating costs
- Provision of community support in an individual's moment of need. Seeing individuals in distress while they're experiencing it has shown to reduce their use costlier emergency and hospital services
- Increased innovation, collaboration, and creativity in services across partners
- Improved mental health outcomes by supporting the social determinants of health



Public Amenities

The Riverside Hub has, through the design process, highlighted key public amenities that will be open to, or bookable by, the community. These include:



Creative Spaces

Bookable art, music, prayer, exercise, and meditation rooms.



Culinary Spaces

A community café, teaching kitchens, vegetable gardens, and the possibility of integrating the preexisting farmer's market into the build.



Outdoor Spaces

Community gardens, rooftop patio, playgrounds, bike-share and repair, greenspace.



Play Spaces

Large indoor playrooms, gymnasium, playgrounds, and party space.



Conference Centre

Bookable banquet, conference, meeting, office, and work-share spaces.



Progress & Timelines

Mapping Out Riverside Hub



After forming a committee in 2019, the hub partners have met biweekly for over 3 years with **the goal of submitting an infrastructure grant proposal in 2022**. Our timelines are as follows:

✓ Complete ↗ Ready to launch ⌚ In progress → Upcoming

- 2019**
- ✓ **Needs Analysis** – Completed January 2019
 - ✓ **Hub Development Community Formed** – April 2019

- 2020**
- ✓ **Feasibility Study**

- 2021**
- ✓ **Space Needs Analysis** – Complete
 - ✓ **1st Ontario Trillium Grant** – Awarded
Consultants Hired: Governance, Social Finance, Fundraising, Communications, Indigenous Engagement
 - ↗ **Fundraising Plan** – Ready to launch
 - ⌚ **Governance Model** – In progress

- 2022**
- | | |
|---|--|
| ⌚ Indigenous Talking Circles – May 2022 | → Finalized Partner Affiliate Agreements and Lease Agreements – August 2022 |
| ↗ Name, Brand and Website – Ready to Launch | → Further Community and E.D.I Engagement – July-September 2022 |
| ✓ Identify a Site – Completed May 2022 | → Site Plan – August 2022 |
| ✓ 2nd Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant – Awarded May 2022
Included funding for: Architects, Community Engagement Specialists, Business Plan and Return on Investment Study | → Site Acquisition – September 2022 |
| ⌚ Business Plan – May – July 2022 | → Assemble a Riverside Hub Board of Directors – Fall 2022 |
| ⌚ Site Feasibility Study – May-August 2022 | → Building Design & Schemata – Fall 2022 |
| → Incorporate as a New Organization – June 2022 | → Apply for Federal Infrastructure Funding – October to December 2022 |
| ⌚ Complete By-Laws – July 2022 | → Launch Fundraising Campaign – Winter 2022 |
| → Apply for Charitable Status – July 2022 | |

- 2023**
- **Begin Construction** – Spring 2023

- 2026**
- **Open our Doors** – Summer 2026

The Business Case

Funding a New Vision for Brantford



We are in the process of developing an in-depth business plan, including the capital costs and ongoing operating expenses. We are hiring a business consultant to support this work. We have conducted a high level break down of costs and potential revenues. Our initial plan assumes the following:

- 171,000 sq. ft., construction at start of 2023, allowing for contingencies, furnishings, and a cost escalation of 15.6%, the hub's total cost is = \$87,000,000

With only a traditional mortgage and typical infrastructure grant contributions from the federal and provincial government, this amount is affordable for hub partners within their operating budgets given their current lease payments.

Our intent is to apply for an Infrastructure Grant (such as Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP)). At a most conservative estimate, with no additional funding or grants, our estimated cost breakdown is:



Federal/Provincial support for 74%-90% of total	\$64,380,000-\$78,300,000
Hub Capital Campaign	\$2,500,000
Commercial Mortgage/ financing	-\$6,200,000-\$21,000,000
Total	\$87,000,000

Hub partners expect to raise funds through ministry contributions and grants in addition to the above that will reduce the estimated need for commercial mortgage expenses further. The project budget is extremely conservative and has a 15-20% contingency for unexpected costs.

Overall, operating expenses will be reduced significantly for partners via cost-sharing, resource sharing, and efficiencies in operations. Once the mortgage is paid off, this money can be reinvested in frontline service.



Our Team

Together for a Stronger Community



The Riverside Hub has been helped along by numerous community consultants, organizations and volunteers.



The Muslim Association
Of Brantford



Fondation
Trillium
de l'Ontario



Development & Design

MTE Consulting – Engineering
+VG Architects
Two Row Architect
Melloul Blamey Construction
Ken Karakas – Remax Realtor

Trillium Consultants

Gravity Inc. – Communications
Meridian Edge – Governance
Tapestry Community Capital – Social Finance
Waterous Holden Amey Hitchon – Legal
KCI Philanthropy – Fundraising
Two Row Architect – Indigenous Engagement

Supporters

MP Larry Brock
MPP Will Bouma
Mayor Kevin Davis (Brantford)
Mayor David Bailey (Brant)
Brian Hutchings – City
of Brantford CAO
City Councilors
Muslim Association of Brantford
Eva Salter – Regional Infrastructure Advisor
David Prang – CEO Chamber of Commerce
Daniel Rankin – ED Brant United Way

The Site

Connecting in Downtown Brantford

The Riverside Hub is currently exploring the East Side of the Icomm Dr. Parkade to determine the site's feasibility as a potential hub location. The City of Brantford owns the land and is supporting our study. We have requested that, should it be suitable, the land be gifted to the Riverside Hub for public use.



The Site

Rejuvenating Brantford's Downtown Core



The Icomm Drive Parkade is located steps from market square in downtown Brantford, visible from the public library, the YMCA, and Wilfred Laurier University buildings. Presently, the Parkade is underutilized and is reportedly an unsafe location as a frequent site for drug use. By connecting to the parking garage, Riverside Hub would also support the health of an under-utilized part of the city. The Icomm Drive site also presently has the Brantford Farmer's Market located on the property. Riverside Hub is in consultations with the City to consider incorporating the Farmer's Market into the design of the building.

The Site

A Glimpse of the Project's Potential

